

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 1, 5, 6, 7, 11 and 15 to read as follows:

- b6c1 1. (Amended) A method of producing a modified fiber product,
according to which method
- cellulosic raw material is formed into a fiber suspension,
 - components modifying the properties of fibers are added to the fiber suspension and
 - the fiber material is dried,
- characterized in that
- an alkyl derivative of cellulose, which is water-soluble in mainly alkaline conditions, is mixed into the fiber suspension in alkaline conditions before introducing the fiber suspension to the paper machine, the derivative being at least partly dissolved in water, and
 - the derivative is allowed to be bonded to the fibrous raw material prior to drying the fibrous material so that the bonded cellulose derivative can not be washed off with water.

B²
5. (Twice Amended) A method according to claim 1, characterized in that the alkyl derivative of cellulose is allowed to be sorbed to the cellulose from the water phase so that at least 10% of the derivative contained by the water phase is allowed to be sorbed to the cellulose.

6. (Twice Amended) A method according to claim 1, characterized in that the pH value of the pulp is more than 8.

7. (Twice Amended) A method according to claim 1, characterized in that the pulp is mixed with the cellulose derivative for at least 5 minutes before drying.

B³
11. (Twice Amended) A method according to claim 1, characterized in that the cellulose derivative to be sorbed is hydroxy-propyl-methyl cellulose (HPMC), hydroxy-ethyl-methyl cellulose (HEMC) and hydroxy-butyl-methyl cellulose (HBMC).

B⁴
15. (Twice Amended) A method according to claim 14,
characterized in that the cellulose derivative is contacted with
the cellulose fibers in an alkaline bleaching stage.

Please add the following new claims, claims 22-26, to the
application:

B⁵
22. (New) A method according to claim 1, characterized in
that the alkyl derivative of cellulose is allowed to be sorbed to
the cellulose from the water phase so that at least 20% of the
derivative contained by the water phase is allowed to be sorbed to
the cellulose.

23. (New) A method according to claim 1, characterized in
that the alkyl derivative of cellulose is allowed to be sorbed to
the cellulose from the water phase so that at least 30% of the
derivative contained by the water phase is allowed to be sorbed to
the cellulose.

24. (New) A method according to claim 1, characterized in that the pH value of the pulp is more than 10.

25. (New) A method according to claim 1, characterized in that the pulp is mixed with the cellulose derivative for at least 10 minutes before drying.

26. (New) A method according to claim 1, characterized in that the pulp is mixed with the cellulose derivative for at least 20 minutes before drying.

REMARKS

Claim 1 has been amended to recite that in the method of the present invention, the alkyl derivative of cellulose that is water-soluble under mainly alkaline conditions and which is mixed with the fiber suspension of cellulosic raw material is mixed with the suspension before introducing the suspension to the paper machine. This amendment is supported in the specification disclosure on page 8, lines 22-25.